

2008 Annual Report

Missouri Advisory Council on Pain and Symptom Management

Pain is the oldest medical problem and a universal physical affliction of humans. It is one of the most common reasons for patients to seek medical attention and one of the most prevalent medical complaints in the United States. Effective pain and symptom management presents a significant challenge for individuals, physicians, and other health care professionals. Clinical experience has demonstrated that adequate pain and symptom management enhances function and improves the quality of life, while uncontrolled pain contributes to disability and despair. Although medical science has learned a great deal about pain and symptom management in the last twenty years, this knowledge has not been well integrated into practice.

To aid in addressing these issues, the Missouri Advisory Council on Pain and Symptom Management (Council) was established by the Missouri legislature in 2003 (RSMo 192.350-355). The Council's nineteen members include health care providers, policy makers, and a pain patient. The Council was directed to submit an annual report to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services.

The Council convened four times in 2008. Major activities and accomplishments include:

- Developed a joint statement on pain management which was accepted and endorsed by the Boards of Healing Arts, Nursing and Pharmacy (see attached).
- Recommended statutory revisions of definitions in the controlled substances act to DHSS. These definitions are outdated and not referenced in the act. These changes will aid in clarifying statutory language that contributes to Missouri's grade of C+ on the State Pain Policy Report Card. Discussed similar recommendations for the Intractable Pain Act with the Board of Healing Arts.
- Collected information on types of providers consulted for pain, length of time pain has been present, and the cause of the pain in addition to pain's impact on performing daily activities through the 2008 Missouri Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey. The survey serves as the data source to determine the impact of pain on Missourians' lives. Data analysis will be performed during 2009.
- Partnered with the Missouri Pain Initiative to plan and develop an 'appropriate prescribing' continuing education opportunity for physicians. This case-based session was presented at Missouri Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons meeting in May and included both clinical aspects of pain management and regulatory requirements.

- Developed and distributed a Spanish version of the educational brochure “Managing Pain Begins With You” designed for consumers. Printed copies of these brochures and “Target Chronic Pain”, an assessment tool for health providers, are available at no cost from the DHSS web site: <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/warehouse/e-literature.html>.
- Maintained an Internet web page dedicated to pain and symptom management on the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) web site: <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/PainManagement/>. Information includes guidelines, standards, statutes and regulations, consumer and health professional resources, and links to related sites. Over 22,000 visits to the site were made in 2008 compared to 9,700 in 2007.
- Submitted article highlighting Council activities and pain management resources available on the web site to the Boards of Chiropractic, Dentistry, Healing Arts, Nursing, Pharmacy and the State Committee on Psychologists for inclusion in their respective newsletters sent to licensees.

The Council recognizes the profound consequences of uncontrolled pain, including both personal costs and financial burden imposed on society. In order to improve the lives of Missourians, assessment and management of pain must be addressed. The Council will continue to evaluate current barriers to pain care and make additional recommendations to enable health care providers to enhance the quality of care and quality of life for Missourians.